

The Midland

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You Told Me of Your Mother

By WITTER BYNNER

You came to town tonight
Wearied and worn of heart, no feeling left
But the effacement that you could not feel.
You came to town tonight
And meeting me who hardly knew you
You told me of your mother, of the memories that
mingled and ordained
Her heart your refuge and her life your minister.
You told me of your mother, naming her with a
proud smile,
Comparing her with women whom we knew.
But on your mouth brimmed heartbreak,
Because you could no longer sit at home waiting the
minutes through,
Helpless, unhelping, an atom of life, made of her
life. . .
You looked at me and in your eyes
Wandered the human woe and could not rest.
Why had she borne you, to be made of her,
To take her life and hold it unfulfilled,
To break a part of it away that could not be restored
By her love or by yours or any tenderness

Or any grief.
Hour after hour, day after day,
Life had assembled its ironic facts
And hurt your heart with them
And left you nothing but desire
To be obedient and mindful of her, to abate
The beat of gay unhappiness
That had shut out her simple word. . . .
Heart touches heart but briefly in this world
And faith is lightly taken and the grave
Is full of unacknowledged love. . . .
You could not sit at home there, separate from her,
And face the wing of death
That makes of silence hurricane.
You came to town tonight,
Met me by chance and tried to laugh with me
At lesser things. And all the while
Death blew with life alternate on your brow. . . .
Then suddenly you rose, cried out upon yourself
For coming and for laughing, clenched your hands
and hid your forehead
For admitting life and its absurdities
When death was the companion you had changed
For me.
O I am humble. But I tell you this,
That greatness was upon me when I looked beyond
the dim horizon of your eyes
And saw arisen like a perfect sun
The rounded wonder of eternity,
Your death, her life, beyond the reach of time,
Commingling me and all men in their dawn.

Three Poems

By SUSAN M. BOOGHER

TROY

We all steal, Paris-like, the beauty that to him
Was Helen,
And flee to fabled cities by forgotten seas
To dream. . . .
Until, from ramparts strange with dawn,
We too incredulous must watch
Avenging ships close in from alien seas.

DAMS

I am a lake
Held here with dams,
And quiet to the sky. . . .

Floods, little floods, flirt by me,
But my dams hold. . . .
And I say to myself
“It is not really a flood
If the dams hold”. . . .
But sometimes, terror-still beneath the sky,
I whisper
“Dams are stronger than floods!”

SILENCE

Never before that silence
Had it been difficult
For us to span the deeps
With swaying bridges
Of light talk
Delicate and strong as steel suspensions
Flung across swift waters:
Never before that silence,—
When the cables of our banter
Would not hold between us. . . .

Was the murmuring garden
In the guilty moonlight,
Or the moment's silence we had built together
Amid the laughing throng
Our Judas?

Between us in the moon-snow,
That little silence grew and deepened,
Strong and palpable as rising waters. . . .
And I lost you
In the waters of our silence,
You!
And all the fireflies of love
That had made magical
Our swaying bridges. . . .

The Canadian Forest

BY RAYMOND WEEKS

Ever since Charley and I made on horseback, forty years ago, that rash voyage from Westport to the Black Hills, we have felt that we understood something of French character. "Yet", you exclaim, "how can that desolate region have shown you anything connected with the French?" None the less, it is there that we saw what we later called the Canadian forest. Wait and you will understand!

I will not weary you with a description of our horses, of the heavy packs which creaked behind our saddles, of discomforts and dangers met. Suffice to say that we were young, and that we eagerly confronted the adventures of the almost limitless desert. At what is now the village of Milford, Nebraska, we said farewell to the last pale-faces whom we expected to see, two families of pioneers who were camping by some springs.

We rode for nearly two days in a northwesterly direction over the ocean level of the alkali plains, and saw no living creatures, except herds of buffalos, villages of prairie dogs, a few rabbits and snakes, and, here and there, a small bird. Late in the afternoon of the second day, our eyes, which had become skilful in sweeping the distant, dead circle of the horizon, perceived an object which grew and grew with our approach, until it proved to be a hut, half cabin, half dug-out. Near it were a wagon, a weather-stained tent, two horses grazing, and a man chopping wood.

Charley and I looked at each other in astonishment to see a man chopping wood in that treeless desert, but we heard clearly the firm strokes of the ax, and once or twice we saw the flash of its blade. Then came the ferocious barking of a dog. The bare-headed wood-chopper looked up in amazement and sprang to seize a carbine which stood leaned against the side of the cabin. Our friendly salutes reassured him. He called sharply to the dog in French, and stepping forward welcomed us in that language. In spite of his Canadian accent, our college French enabled us to understand a small part of what he said. Before we had time to dismount, his dark-haired young wife, with two children clinging to her, appeared in the doorway and looked at us with astonishment not unmixed with pleasure.

The cheerful little French mother cooked supper for us in the open air, nor were her two boys the only ones to aid her, for Charley and I lent a hand. Then we brought from our packs delicacies which aroused enthusiasm,—sugar, salt, hard-tack and coffee. The young husband returned to his wood cutting. The rapid blows of his ax rang loud and clear in that strange place. Judging from the sound, the log was the dry trunk of a sycamore tree. My appetite made me forget the wood chopping, and I was following with pleasure the preparations for supper, when Charley touched me on the arm and directed my eyes to the young Frenchman. *He was striking the log with the back of his ax!* There was no doubt: regularly and powerfully the head of the ax descended

on the resonant log, then rose, flashed in the air, and descended again. Not a chip flew. Perhaps never in the strange history of men had a log been so punished. Our curiosity, however, was not to be satisfied until after supper, for at that moment the little wife said with a sweet smile: "Messieurs, vous êtes servis!"

We all threw ourselves down on the warm earth at a distance from the fire of grass and faggots, and Charley and I enjoyed one of the most delightful meals we had ever eaten. When our repast was well under way, Madame disappeared into the cabin with a bowl of broth. After supper, Charley and I pulled forth our tobacco pouches, to the pleasure of our host and the wonder of the bright-eyed boys. After a while, their mother came and finished her supper. The sun by that time had disappeared in an ocean of crimson. In every direction stretched the level, limitless prairies. A hardly perceptible twilight commenced to arise from the earth and to close mysteriously, like the petals of a dusky flower. We seemed submerged in an impenetrable zone, on the far side of silence. We sat and smoked without speaking, until I had gathered a sheaf of French words to inquire of our host an explanation of his strange method of cutting wood. He took no offence at my question. How can I give you an idea of his explanation? Perhaps by translating its salient parts, its significant words which we understood or divined. "We come from Canada," said he with a pathetic gesture. "Seek mild climate—My father

dying of lungs—bad advice—lost in desert—Father more sick— Spring of water here—Build cabin—Father beg return Canada—Delirium—He in cabin there, sick, sick—I go, horses, wagon, fifty miles to stream — cut dead sycamore — bring here— beat sycamore many times every day with head of ax— Deceive Father—He thinks in forest of Canada, back there,” and again the pathetic gesture. Tears came to our eyes when we understood suddenly the fragmentary story. As soon as I could control my voice I inquired: “And what will you do after—after,” but my sentence remained unfinished. He replied: “Return Canada, after,” and his sentence too was left uncompleted.

Charley and I slept that night in the tattered tent, under the dome of a million stars. Soon after sunrise, we ate breakfast, replenished our supply of water, insisted on leaving some sugar, salt, and tobacco, and said adieu to the smiling group of four persons. They wished us bon voyage and waved their hands to us as we rode away. The baked earth resounded under the hoofs of our horses. The prairie grass seemed to rise gradually behind us and soon concealed the children up to their shoulders. A few minutes later, they were all invisible, and then the cabin followed them, sinking into the immense plain. “That is the greatest hero I ever expect to meet!” said I as we rode along. Charley did not reply for a while, then he said: “Do you know, I am even more impressed than you. It dawns on me that in France he would not be a hero at all, but merely a typical Frenchman.”

Ad Astra

By ELIZABETH ATKINS

Thy memory hath soothed the ache and fear
Born of the starry vastness of the night;
For in the marvel of thy spirit's light
I have beheld night's likeness — all her clear
And ever-deepening spaces, that appear
Dream-rapt with expectation, where the white
Far stars yearn earthward, summoning by love's
might
Earth's answering love, as if to heaven's near.

Ah, star-like one! When first I saw thy fire
Low in the rosy east, I thought to fly
Over the shining levels of the dawn,
And win to thee on flame-free, swift desire!
But now the night ascends the quiet sky;
Remote, I watch — till hope of thee is gone.

Lilies That Sleep

By PHOEBE HOFFMAN

Those silver petals gleam in their last sun,
As one by one
They fold
Round the deep gold.
And all their glory and their freshness close
In a dull sheath beneath the evening rose.
As night stoops down with perfumed breath
To kiss the pool, the lilies sleep with death.

An Offer to Buy

By JOHN AMID

Hugh Pought was irrigating. Leaning on his large cultivating hoe, in the brilliant sunlight of the still, hot forenoon, he watched the ten-inch flow of clear water bubble over the top of a cement stand-pipe, to run musically along its appointed furrows toward the cabbage-patch. Behind him rose the green, graceful, drooping branches of a huge pepper tree, whose grateful shade fell almost to the stand-pipe; behind the pepper tree were large, bare, blue mountains; but beyond the cabbages, in the other direction, the slope of the wide valley fell away flat as a floor, the horizon broken only here and there by the dark foliage of eucalyptus clumps, or groves of sentinel live-oaks. Overhead towered a cloudless, fathomless, illimitable sky, blue as that above the ancient land of the Egyptians, above the deserts of Arabia, above the ruins of Babylon, above the Sphinx.

The flow of water was sufficient to irrigate three rows of cabbages at once, traveling down six furrows, since the patch was not a large one. With a single stroke of his hoe, when the allotted rows were thoroughly soaked, Pought would open a new channel for the water, which gurgled beneath his guiding hand. And as he watched the stream straightened, or turned aside, diverted, right-angled,

or straightened again, according to his whim — clear, clean, and sparkling where it left the stand-pipe, becoming less and less noisy, more and more muddy, until, dusty-coated with the dry, loose soil, it slipped silently along the smaller furrows past the cabbage heads — Pought thought of the current of his own life, turned sharply, suddenly, this way or that, beneath the guiding power of — he knew not what.

Here, he bubbled along in his first home, a farmer's boy in Iowa; here — with his hoe he closed one channel, turning the stream at right angles into a new one — his father sold out everything on an unexpected favorable offer, and came to California; here — he opened minor furrows among the cabbage rows, thinking vaguely of his brothers and sisters — the death of his parents threw the children on their own resources; here — he diverted the water from the last furrow to the other side of a cabbage-row — he went to San Francisco, looking for work; then came the chance that took him to the Klondike; then, the series of circumstances that kept him moderately successful while nearly every one of the boys around him was striking it rich; then, suddenly, as always, back to the States; then prospecting through Nevada; then, with the gradually accumulated savings, — he diverted another stream to a new furrow — his short venture in the shoe business, and — failure; more prospecting; then, a fair strike, and — marriage; then the restaurant business, with a slow, steady loss; and finally — he

gazed abstractedly into the thin current of muddy, dust-covered water soaking rapidly into the soil at the end of the row — the chance to sell out, at a loss, and — this ranch.

Always the abrupt changes. Always the qualified success, or actual failure, where others scored. Always the diminishing stream, with half-caught affluence soaking quietly out of sight. — Why? He knew no answer.

Recrossing the cabbage-patch, which he had traversed in following up the diminishing current, he found a certain wordless encouragement in viewing again the stand-pipe with its ceaseless stream of cool water burbling out to sparkle in the sun. After all, were not vigor, health, youth, and hope, still all with him — at least in a measure? He was but thirty-five, and strong, like a bear. If he could only sell this ranch, now, before the balance of his diminishing stake could soak into it, they might yet make their fortune. Why not? Other men were able to succeed. Why should not he succeed also, instead of simply — living? With brows contracted, leaning upon his hoe, he pondered the matter heavily, as a bear might think.

To Hugh Pought, thus ruminatively quiet, there entered, in an electric runabout, a small, dapper, little man, with a wide smile of great friendliness, and round, black eyes, that glittered like a rat's.

Immediately the irrigater's size became evident. Alone in the hot sunlight, with only the pepper tree, the mountains, the far horizon, the sky, the water

and the cabbages about him, he had seemed merely a large, well-proportioned human animal, of no particularly remarkable characteristics. But with the advent of the newcomer, who was below average height, Hugh's great stature, his six feet three of brawn and miner's muscle, became suddenly noteworthy, heroic, colossal.

"The Reverend Real Estate," Hugh remarked, half-audibly, without enthusiasm.

The appellation was not inaccurate. The ranchman's visitor was, in truth, a Reverend, through the courtesy of a former calling; also, he traded in land. Piloting his electric to a dusty stop, where the track ran out beside the cabbage-patch, he climbed quickly down, with all the athletic agility of an organ-grinder's monkey, and advanced toward Pought with hand extended, and an ever-widening smile.

"How *are* you, Mr. Pought?" he exclaimed, with every appearance of exuberant delight. Indeed, so alive was the man, so tensely alert to his finger-tips, that his seeming friendliness was far from being mere hypocrisy. In the glow of his own self-satisfaction, he felt a great gush of kindliness, of sympathy, toward all men, toward all things. But, equally obviously, he had used this great cheeriness, this great sense of friendly well-being, so constantly that it had become little more than stock-in-trade. The Rev. Elmer Timmin had made at least a minor success both in the ministry, and, latterly, in his own real estate office. "Isn't this wonderful *weather* we're having? *Perfect*, perfect! Even for Cali-

fornia!" He smiled always, now in apparent appreciation of his words. Seizing Pought's hand, he squeezed it with a semblance of great affection. "Glad to see you in *church* yesterday morning! Fine!" Again the wide smile. "Beautiful sermon our pastor gave us, wasn't it? So full of *inspiration!* You ought to come oftener."

"It's great weather." The admission came slowly, almost grudgingly, as though Hugh were reluctant to agree in any way with this pointed-nosed, glad little flea of a man, who skipped through life so delightedly.

"Mr. Pought," ejaculated the Rev. Timmin suddenly, after a few moments of desultory verbal sparring that failed to net any advantage to either side, "I thought I'd run up and speak to you about a matter of *business*." Intonation, broad smile, and emphasis, all combined to convey the impression that the Rev. Mr. Timmin had just recalled the object of his errand, that he would give great weight to Mr. Pought's opinions, that he considered it, in fact, a great honor to converse on business with Mr. Pought, and that, doubtless, Mr. Pought would consider it an equally great honor so to speak with him.

"Let's get into the shade," replied Pought, in his deliberate way. Moving to the shadow of the drooping pepper branches he sat down on the edge of a wheel-barrow, leaving the Rev. Mr. Timmin to stand, or find a resting place upon a conveniently adjacent rock, that looked comfortable enough, though dusty.

"Yes," returned the ex-preacher, with grateful appreciation, "it *is* rather hot, isn't it?" He looked around for a moment, regarded the rock, and then, deciding in favor of his immaculate apparel, elected to stand. Removing his wide-brimmed black felt hat, he mopped a perspiring brow, bordered with neatly trimmed, iron-grey hair.

"*Mr. Pought!*" Always the extremely modulated tones, followed by the great smile. "You have your place here listed with Henry Muller, have you not? At twelve thousand, including the mortgage? Fifty-five hundred for your equity?" He paused to flash the everlasting smile. "Am I correctly informed?"

Pought hesitated. Sitting upon the edge of the wheel-barrow, his head was still nearly on a level with that of the Rev. Timmin, standing. He had had his own reasons for listing his property only with Muller. "Yes," he agreed at length, "that's it."

The Rev. Timmin gave his smile an extra polish. "I suppose of course"—he laughed apologetically—"that is merely an asking price, Mr. Pought? Because otherwise we'd have nothing at all to talk about, to be sure!" This time he allowed himself quite a hearty laugh, tipping his head back a trifle.

"Well,"—Pought considered, frowning—"in a way it's just an asking price. But I wouldn't want to give a lower figure unless I had a definite offer. As it is, that would hardly net me half what I put into the place."

"You *don't* say so!" Mr. Timmin's voice con-

veyed a wealth of sympathy. "I wouldn't have suspected that." He became suddenly more confidential. "Mr. Pought, to be perfectly frank with you, I have a customer who is interested in your place; but to do any business at all it would be absolutely necessary to get your *very lowest possible price.*"

Pought turned his hoe handle a bit, regarding it intently. "No," he said. "You'd have to get an offer."

"Mr. Pought, if I could get you four thousand for your equity,—"

Pought shook his head.

"Forty-five hundred?"

This time Pought studied the hoe handle for a still longer interval. "I'd have to have a definite offer," he reiterated, at last.

The real estate minister smiled, satisfied. "Mr. Pought, four thousand was what I figured you would take. That's about all I'd really consider your equity here worth." This time the smile was depressing. "But if you can give me anything definite to go on, I'm pretty sure that I could get you as much as forty-five." Now it was a smile of happy encouragement. "That's a rather exceptional offer these days, when real estate is so quiet hereabouts. Of course—" now the smile was one to beget confidence,— "this is strictly confidential between ourselves."

Pought nodded. Loser again! It was hardly a third of what the place had cost him, adding yearly losses to the initial purchase price. But the min-

ister spoke truly concerning the scarcity of investors. "All right," he announced, wearily, "forty-five'll do, if it is a definite offer." Looking out from under the pepper tree, into the bright sunlight over the bluish-green cabbages, the big miner thought again of the things that had been running through his mind before the ex-preacher's arrival. For a moment or two he hardly noticed that the Rev. Timmin continued talking, with a smile that was now quite apologetic. Then his mind came back again to the matter in hand, ready to give battle, like the disordered rear-guard of a defeated army, struggling into alignment through sheer necessity.

"—And so," the Rev. Timmin was concluding, "I realized you'd have no objection, provided you got your own price."

"What's that?"

"I was just explaining about my client. You see, we only had Muller's price when I met him." Mr. Timmin was very conciliatory; his smile was most patient. "Muller would never have made a sale, for, you know"—the voice was apologetic for poor Mr. Muller's shortcomings—"Henry is no salesman at all. But I saw the man had taken a fancy to the place here, and worked along until I'd made sure of an offer, knowing how much it would mean to you to sell." Always the smile. "Naturally, the actual figure will have to remain strictly confidential, between ourselves, as we agreed. Whatever is paid above forty-five will come to me, and, of course, when you are getting your price, you won't have

any objection to standing by whatever arrangements I make in the final sale." Having again completed his peroration, the little man hummed brightly, gazing out at the wonderfully colored vista about them. "What a wonderful view you do get from here! Actually *inspiring*, isn't it?"

Pought's mind, though slow, was reasonably sure. "I get forty-five hundred" — he went over the matter aloud for Mr. Timmin's corroboration — "and you get whatever this guy'll pay above that, while I keep my mouth shut and let him think it's all coming to me? That's it?"

"Except my commission. That's the customary five per cent." The smile was now positively jubilant. "I felt sure we'd be able to reach an understanding that would help both of us."

"And just what is the figure you'd want me to stick to for your customer's benefit? Have you settled that?"

"Why, it seemed best not to go below the figures you gave Muller. Really, you know, it is our duty, in a way, to protect him in this matter, Mr. Pought."

Again Hugh considered, working the details slowly into his mind. The Rev. Timmin had in some way, probably by mere chance, stumbled on Muller's possible customer; he had found out, perhaps from the customer, Muller's asking price for the Pought property; appropriating the prospect for himself, after the manner of a dog seizing a bone, he had, practically, put through the sale at that figure. Then, wishing to net something for himself

beyond the customary commission, he secured the forty-five hundred offer, and would pocket the remaining thousand himself, allowing the buyer to suppose that the full amount went into the property. By the sharp practice, with its deceit, the owner would get a whole thousand less than would have been the case had Muller consummated the deal. Only after he had these matters nicely ordered in his slow-moving mind did Hugh speak.

"It's a wonder," he said, slowly, "you didn't call me brother."

The ex-minister looked at him quickly, wondering if he had heard aright. "Pardon me?" he questioned.

"I've always wondered," Hugh went on deliberately, his heavy voice sounding almost musical, "how you got your money. Now I know. And I'll tell you something. You climb right into your buggy and beat it out of here, before I kick you out." He rose to his full height, towering over the little man like a grizzly bear above a coyote. "Hear me! And if you ever bring your carcass onto my place again, I'll throw it clear back to where you came from — and your dinky little wagon after it."

"But Mr. Pought!" ejaculated the Rev. Timmin, backing away a couple of steps toward his electric, "surely —"

"Shut up!" commanded Pought. "I'm tired of you."

Cowardice was not one of the Rev. Elmer's attributes, but instinct warned him that sometimes, even

in getting away, there is no time like the present. As he climbed, with as much speed as he could command without further loss of dignity, into his runabout, Pought thought of a final satisfying word.

"Scat!" he said.

For some time after the runabout had circled hurriedly away around the cabbage-patch, Hugh Pought, again leaning on his hoe, remained in deep thought, while the dust of the real-estate man's departure still hung in the air.

"You boob!" he commented at length, addressing himself, personified, in the cabbage-patch, "there's one of the reasons you never get anywhere! Forty-five isn't a bad offer, these days." His gaze wandered to the water that still bubbled comfortably into the sunlight from the top of the cement standpipe. "The worst of it is," he concluded severely, "you'd do it again, and always will." He walked out into the bright heat, to where three rows of cabbages had received a double soaking. Then he heaved a great sigh, pitying himself mightily.

"Some folks sure do have it easy!" he told the cabbages, and went on with his irrigating.

Two Poems

By RUTH MAURINE SMITH

MOTORING AT NIGHT

On into the encircling dark, and ever on,
Gleam the smooth windings of the road, wan
Like a shred of mist. And unfamiliar tree-forms
 loom beside, above,
Glide past — elusive shadows we may love
But for the space in which they seem to move.
Down swiftly let us slip through warm, scent-laden
 hollow,
Up again, up to the stars — where follow
The keen winds of hills, winds that cling,
And cool,
And snatch our brief, infrequent words, and fling
Them back, until they are stilled like singing pebbles
 in a pool.

Where is the world? Before? Behind?
Ah, it is not, except where dreaming hills and star-
 filled valleys wind.
This is nor day, nor the dear kindness of dawn,
Nor summer morning, nor the still hour spring twi-
 light came upon.
This is a lyric night, all deep-toned music, rhythm,
 bound
In one strange harmony of silence — lyric yet with-
 out sound,

Save for the passionless throb on throb the engine
yields.

Bowed shocks of grain lie dark on tired fields
That rest,
At last, after the harvest.

Turn left? Turn right?
Ah, ask not left, nor right,
Nor east nor west,
But turn — down fragrant paths of dark, unguessed.
What matters it — adventuring?
More swiftly on! Beauty and stillness tarry on
hushed wing.
The night has but begun,
And winter comes, and silent wastes, and frozen
stars, ere it is done.

CITY PIGEONS

They float and dip, — gray, gleaming ones, or dark,
Searching the blue above a city-park.
Unheeded by the crowd below, they sweep
And circle, sink, ascend the skyey deep,
And swiftly interweave in glistening flight
Down clean blue hills of air. Then all alight,
One after one . . . three . . . five, then one . . .
and one,
To spread wind-silvered feathers in the sun.

Good Tidings

By V. D. HYDE

The rhythmical creak-creak, slop-slop of the washing machine ceased, and a rich strong voice, vibrant with a pride unmistakably maternal, took its place. "Will you look at that now?"

Mrs. Graff turned her wan gaze from the window at which she had a full view of the hot back yard, where the basement flat boy was exulting in a fine little pool of water around the garden washer, and watched her washwoman's six-year-old daughter, Bridget Maloney, closing the kitchen door silently as though in a house of death, and then — with the fatuity of childhood — tramping noisily to the middle of the room and standing to be inspected, hands clasped behind her, eyes modestly cast down, and mouth screwed into a perfect persimmon knot.

Little Bridget knew that her pinafore was clean, that her hair was neatly plaited in two little red pig-tails which were tied with blue ribbon well acquainted with the wash tub, and that, above all, she had lovely new shoes on, the first really truly new shoes she remembered having in her short life. But she was just a little afraid of Mrs. Graff, this lady for whom mother washed every Monday, who was always more or less sick, who was so kind and so soft-voiced, who often gave them something very much needed by the Maloney family which Mrs. Maloney

as often feared the giver herself needed, the last gift being these beautiful new shoes now on her feet; this lady who, mother said, was always "in hot water till it was a great wonder she wasn't in Bloomingdale long ago": Death having robbed her of a good husband only a few months ago, and now the Hospital — the big Hospital down on Sixth Street, having taken possession of the wee Phillie, who had assured little Bridget many a penny for "the mind-in' of him", and who was just beginning to say "Bid-Bid-ur-ur-ur", just as sweet. They said little Phillie had that awful disease the babies were all dying of, but sure he did not look so sick as his mamma, all wrapped and bolstered up as she was in an armchair at the kitchen window so that mother, along with the washing, could cheer her up and look to her invalid wants, the lady's father being that old and weak as not to be safe to trust at all at all.

Little Bridget, under the stress of these rapid and sympathetic reflections, momentarily forgot her beautiful new shoes and her attitude of demonstration, and heaved a sigh.

"For the Lord's sake, now hear her, the poor baby, and her with the beautifullest new shoes in Brooklyn. Now, what is it fur, mother's darlint? Tell the lady."

"Ain't it awful they didn't hold Phillie up to-day, ma'am?" under this urge said little Bridget politely, with an expression of deep commiseration. She was looking at Mrs. Graff, and could not see her mother's frantic gestures for silence. And,

seeing Mrs. Graff hastily put her handkerchief to her eyes, she sought out the corner of her pinafore and put it to the corner of one of her own bright eyes companionably.

But in the course of its wanderings from the dejected figure in the armchair at the window, the second bright eye reached the figure of a sternly alert mother, with arms akimbo and a countenance that plainly thundered, "Now, ye've done enough!"

So the pinafore dropped from the first bright eye in a panic, and a very apologetic little voice said, "Can I be helping you, mother?"

Whatever else could be said of Bridget Maloney, Senior, the holding of umbrage in the abstract, and of displeasure in the concrete against her own "little chick", as she called little Bridget, was not one of her faults. At this mark of perception and penitence on the part of her offspring, she relaxed, and said briskly: "Do be afther lookin' at her beautiful feet, now, Mrs. Graff. Them shoes is wonders the way they fit, and the very first the man brought out, too. The man said a long time it was since he had fit sich beautiful little feet as the child has, and her niver havin' only old casts-off iver since she was hatched. Be afther walkin' now, Biddy, till Mrs. Graff sees how ye can do it in new togs—do they hurt ye, darlint? What! Not even a teenty little bit? And yer mother niver havin' a pair in her life that didn't dror fit to kill! But they're that high quality, and ye've the perfect feet! Aw, do look, Mrs. Graff."

"Please, Mrs. Graff, do look at me beautiful feet."

Little Bridget tiptoed around with the languishing air she thought suitable to a state occasion, and at last won a faint smile from the sick lady she pitied so.

"You are a sweet little Bride" (Mrs. Graff used the old English pet name to the keen delight of the child, who knew as well as the next one the meaning of the word), "and your feet—are beautiful little feet. . . . Were they holding the babies up when you passed, dear?"

Little Bridget paused, and looked anxiously at her mother.

"She didn't come home from school that way, ma'am," replied her mother. "Now, just you be patient and hopeful. Tain't at this hour they hold the babies up, you know. I tould you. It's dinner time. And it's me'll come to the hospital tomorrow at noon, and watch for little Phillip, and it's you'll know inside of five minutes afther—which is as fast as a big elephant like me can run from there to here."

"Suppose—suppose," in a tense whisper, "suppose they couldn't hold him up—they haven't held him up since they began the practice. Suppose it's because—"

"Sure now. I ain't a-goin' to be supposin' anything o' the kind," brusquely. "He's alive all right, Father Donnelly tould me so last night. Didn't I tell ye as soon as I came? And him that kind that he wint to inquire afther yer doctor had telephoned

only two hours before! Now, ye must be patient, for the good Lord's watchin' over all. And jist be lookin' at the child's lovely feet. I niver did see sich beautiful quality shoes. And she can run like a deer. If Phillip's held up tomorrow noon, it's she, and not an ould elephant like me, it's she wid the beautiful feet of her shall run all the way wid the glad news to ye."

"How beautiful upon the mountains are the feet of him that bringeth good tidings.' "

They all turned toward the door near the sink which let into the dining room. There stood Mrs. Graff's father, a superannuated clergyman, so frail, so tall and white, that it did not seem possible a living voice — and such a rumbling bass voice — could emanate from such a body.

"I was jist tellin' her,— now, what is it ye want, Mr. Carson, dear? Don't ye know I'd a brought ye a drink? — was jist tellin' her Biddy and her beautiful new shoes will run and tell her quick when the baby is held up at the windy tomorrow. And she must trust the Lord till then."

The old clergyman regarded them solemnly, and raised his arms as if about to pronounce a benediction. Instead, he turned around to the sink, and as he began the Psalm, "The Lord is my Shepherd", took down the aluminum cup that hung above the taps, filled it with water, and, with a couple of words from the Psalm after each mouthful, finished Psalm and drink at the same time, hung up the cup, and wandered feebly back into the next room, intoning "I shall not want—I shall not want." "

"Listen to the darlint," half whispered Mrs. Maloney, in chastened tones. "I do think it a privilege to have the ould angel livin' here. Biddy, go in wid ye, and talk wid him while I finish."

Little Bridget obediently went, and her mother continued her efforts to divert Mrs. Graff's mind from the hospital window. "Isn't he trustful, wid all yer bad luck now? Some people have jist that luck. There's the Maloneys now! Ivery mother's son for six famblies has died vi'lent. The last was my Mike — he fell off'n a roof wid his hod and was kilt entirely at wanst! That was two months before Biddy was born, Ochone! But it's the sickly ones that lives the longest, quare as it seems. So don't ye mind, ye'll live twicet as long as I will, Bridget Maloney, that's twicet as strong as ye are. And the baby, he'll come home, niver fret, jist 'coz he's sickly like. There now, I'm nearly done. The wash was that big to-day; and I'll lave it hung out to-night — the janitor says it's all right. And I'll be over airly in the mornin' and bring it in before I go to Mrs. Hartley's."

She paused, and held her finger to her ear. "Sure, listen. I belave he's tachin' her the txxt!" They could hear the two voices, the childish treble of little Bridget and the old man's deep bass, mingling in the recitative: "How beautiful upon the mountains are the feet of him that bringeth good tidings, that publisheth peace!"

She went into the yard carrying a big basket of clothes, and Mrs. Graff watched her almost envi-

ously as she pinned the pieces to the lines, the setting sun glorifying her red hair, and her voice rising and falling in an old Irish lilt. It was late for a wash to be hung out — after five. But the Graffs had to take Bridget's odd hours of time, both because she worked cheaper for them — Mrs. Graff being in straitened circumstances—and because she did many odd jobs not called for in the contract for washing, from the philanthropy in her Irish heart and for the little gifts Mrs. Graff seemed to be always able to confer, however badly off she might be.

* * * * *

Several days passed with no news from little Phillip except the vague answers by telephone from the hospital, and the priest's equally vague messages by Mrs. Maloney, all to the effect that the Graff baby was doing well. But neither Mrs. Maloney nor little Bridget, who made daily trips past the hospital, one to school, the other to work, could report the "blissid holding up", as the former regretfully admitted. And the mother's anguish of spirit was such that she "tuk to her bed", as Mrs. Maloney tearfully told the priest when she besought him to entrust some more hopeful words to her willing tongue.

"He'll he held up jist so soon as he makes a *big* change for the better", she assured the despairing mother. "They don't want to give no false hopes. But sure he's doing pretty well, and ye must be patient and remember that no news is good news."

But as she spoke her back was to the bed which she had just been straightening up, and the sobbing mother could not see the tears of doubt in her kind blue eyes. "Sure, Father Donnelly said he is to be wrapped in the fine kerridge robe of white wid the pink ribbons and the tassels hangin' from the corners, jist as I said he must be, like he wint there in, so's we'll know the darlint. Now, you kape the peace, or whin he comes you won't be able to get him well at all, at all."

Little Bridget was sorely disappointed that she had not had the opportunity she so much coveted of bringing the good news, to the lady she was a little afraid of, that little Phillip had been held up at the window. Daily, at noon and when school was out, she patrolled the side of the hospital where was the window at which the nurses were in the habit of holding up the recuperating babies during the height of the scourge of Infantile Paralysis — human bulletins to reassure the poor mothers on the sidewalk below. No mother was prompter to arrive, or more bitterly disappointed on leaving without greeting her own flesh and blood in the little tableau at the window, than the six-year-old in the "beautiful new shoes" which, despite her assertions to her mother and the donor, had now produced a decided limp.

"I do belave the child's in a bad way," sighed Mrs. Maloney to little Bridget. "Here's two weeks now he's there, and we've niver seen the color of his kerridge robe at the windy. If he dies, so'll she.

And God knows what'll become of the ould darlint,
Father Carson."

* * * * *

A blistering hot morning had been relieved by a smart rain exactly at noon, and pedestrians were exchanging weather greetings as cheerily as when Spring suddenly bursts into Winter's domain. Even the women who gathered under the hospital window seemed less constrained and anxious than usual, and one of them laughingly accosted little Bridget as she limped up,—for the beautiful new shoes had now made a dreadful blister on one of the heels of the beautiful little feet that had never known but the comfort of half-worn shoes:

"Here she is—the little mother! God bless the child. How old is your baby, Mrs., and wasn't you married mighty young?"

At this sally, which brought a burst of noisy laughter from the anxious hearts of the waiting women, little Bridget opened her mouth to reply, when suddenly the hospital window popped up. There was perfect silence among the women, who threw their heads back to look up eagerly. And there in all the glory of a pink-ribboned, betasseled carriage robe was a frail morsel of a babe held high in the arms of a smiling nurse, who was scanning the group below for the lighting up of a mother's face.

"Phillie, Phillie," screamed little Bridget, wildly dancing up and down, sore foot and all, her hands upreached, her little blonde pigtails sticking out

almost between her shoulders where the back of her head was resting. "Phillie, Phillie, I'll be running home and tell your mother." The tassels on the carriage robe waved gaily, the nurse nodded and laughed, the mothers on the sidewalk sniffed, and wiped their eyes and noses.

"Good-bye, Phillie, come home quick, good-bye," called little Bridget, as she turned and ran up the street as fleetly as the deer her mother had likened her to, panting and gasping exultantly.

Up Sixth Street to the first cross street—"Beautiful are the feet in the mountings"—along the cross street to the next street—"of them that bring good tidings"—across that street—it wasn't far, just the second house—"Beautiful are the feet—beautiful are the feet"—even though they do hurt from new shoes—"that bring good tidings". She had the good tidings—and here she was in front of the house—yes, she knew her mother told her always to wait till she got to the crossing, but she never was in such a hurry before, and right there was the curb in front of Mrs. Graff's, and—

* * * * *

"Why, little Bridget, is it you?"

Little Bridget opened her eyes—she hadn't known they were shut till they had to be opened—and there was Mrs. Graff's doctor, and he was holding her in his arms like the nurse held little Phillie, right beside his automobile, just as when he some-

times jumped her in and took her around the block. And he was looking so frightened.

" 'How beautiful are the feet' — my foot hurt so I hit the curb, and did you pick me up, doctor? Well, it don't hurt me now so put me down quick. I've got good tidings—good tidings for her—Phillie's been held up — held up" —

She had almost sung the good tidings, and now she paused breathlessly, and the doctor held her closely and said, "Never mind, we'll just go back to the hospital, little Bridget, I'm afraid you are hurt. I'll send Mrs. Graff word" —

"No, no, I must take the good tidings. I've waited and waited — and now I've got them. 'How beautiful are the feet' — Father Carson learned it to me all — 'that bear good tidings'. She's waiting — I must tell her right away."

The doctor looked attentively into her eager face, then quietly walked up the stoop and was soon at the door of Mrs. Graff's tiny bedroom — but not without little Bridget struggling every foot of the way down the hall with her lusty little arms, admonishing the doctor in a loud whisper to let her down on her feet — "they didn't hurt her one scrap, not any more'n if she hadn't any feet."

But the doctor only held her more tightly. At the door of the bedroom he paused, and little Bridget took up her refrain, while Mrs. Graff, already up on her elbow before they met her sight, stretched her neck in eager anxiety, unmindful of the curious fact that the messenger was in the doctor's arms.

"Phillie's well — he says he'll be home soon — his tassels blowed and blowed out of the window. He laughed and the nurse laughed. 'How beautiful — how beautiful are — the good tidings'" —

Little Bridget's head fell back on the doctor's shoulder and the light went out of her face. Mrs. Graff's eyes slowly closed, a smile, faint at first but growing in glory, spread over her thin countenance, and she settled back on her pillow. The doctor stepped inside the room, put his foot on a chair and rested the child on his knee, pushing her eyelids up and laying his cheek on her breast. And then he looked up and over at the bed.

"Little Bridget's very badly hurt. I — she —", his voice was hoarse and he caught his breath. "She stumbled right in front of my car. I — I" —

But the face on the pillow gave no response, offered him neither advice nor consolation. It only smiled more blissfully, the hands found each other as in prayer, and the lips moved.

So he set his teeth to stop the shaking of his jaw, and took his burden out of the house and into the car and thence to the hospital — the hospital where Phillie had just been held up at the window. When the doctor bore little Bridget in at the side entrance — just as if she had been a great pathetic bouquet, or a gift or something else permitted to enter that way, the last mother was just going away with her bulletin engraved on her brain. So short the time was.

Little Phillie came home three days later in all

the distinction of convalescence and a newly washed white carriage robe with pink ribbons and tassels at the corners. And at the same time little Bridget went to her home lying rigid across Father Donnelly's knees — for her mother would have no black wagon bringing her baby to her.

And while Mrs. Graff, softly singing a lullaby, flitted joyously about her tiny bedroom, pausing now and again to peep into the cradle of her sleeping Phillie, Bridget Maloney sat desolate in her own poor flat, and leaned against the foot of the bed where little Bridget had slept in her arms ever since birth, watching the hands of strangers for the first and last time dress her baby, and staring vacantly as she repeated in a tense whisper,

“ ‘How beautiful — how beautiful are —
. good tidings!’ ”

The Happy Heart

By MINNA MATHISON

I wake with my great happiness
To dawns new-dyed and days new-blest;
I wake, and tremble with the stress
Of joy that stings to glad unrest.

My olden peace is gone from me, —
Not bliss itself escapes alloy —
But oh, for white tranquillity
I wear the broidered robe of joy.

The Harbor of Friends

By WANDA I. FRAIKEN

Adolph Elleson, leaning over the bridge railing, looked down at the river below, upon which the spring sun shone kindly, dimpling the drab waters with beams of golden light and casting a dazzling brilliancy far out where the sky disappeared in the calm blue of Lake Michigan, untroubled now by wind and storms.

The old man shook his white head dolefully and clung with clumsy fingers to the iron supports of the bridge. It was only a little more than two weeks before that Adolph had opened the bridge for the Ann Arbor Number 2, setting out from the harbor in the height of the spring storms. He had waved a farewell to the men standing on deck and had watched the great boat cut its way through the blocks of ice in the channel until it slipped away out of sight.

That was the last that was seen or heard of either men or crew. They had perished out on the open lake somewhere, but no one knew more. The old lake had played sad tricks before, but never with quite such utter cruelty.

In the distance, there was a warning call. Adolph straightened up, his eyes searching the expanse of

water far beyond. A boat whistle sounded distinctly, and at the same moment a huge car-ferry, sister ship to the lost Number 2, appeared steaming toward the harbor. The bridge-tender reached for the rope and began to toll the bell. The boat came sliding forward and gave another piercing shriek, accompanied by the feebler notes of the bell. At the third call, the pedestrians, the boys on bicycles, the teams and automobiles made a dash across the swing of the bridge, Adolph advanced to the lever and turned slowly round and round, the bridge opened, and the leviathan of the lake, with its Jonah of freight cars in its capacious maw, passed through with a gentle sigh of steam, the men waving to him from the deck. At the memory of those other men, gone now, Adolph fluttered a shaking arm and turned his broad back upon the tormenting vision. The bridge swung back in place, the sea-gulls ceased their wild screams, and the normal activity of Main Street was resumed with a rush.

It was Saturday afternoon, and Emil would be coming soon. Adolph climbed the stairway up to the gray house, perched like an eagle's nest on the top of the bridge. He opened the door of the tiny cell, and Neptune, Adolph's gray cat, looked up sleepily from the cushioned arm-chair in the sunny window. Adolph poured some water out of a jug into a basin with unsteady hands, washed his face, covered his heavy beard with a thick soapy lather, sputtered and puffed like a dog as he shook off the water, and emerged as white as a spring lamb.

Then he reached for a comb in the cupboard above him, smoothed out his damp locks and beard with feverish haste, brushed off his coat, and tied a red necktie over the sober calico shirt.

He hurried through these preparations, not with joyful anticipation, as on Saturdays in the past, but with the hope that by all this painful energy he might chase away the lump that rose in his throat. Adolph had been one of the few who had refused to believe that the boat had gone to the bottom. Hugging his forlorn hopes, he had lived through one day of silence after another; but to-day, as he had watched the sunshine play over the river, he knew at last that the big boat was gone forever.

The Ann Arbor Number 2 had been built the year that Adolph had first served as bridge-tender, and as it passed and repassed on its journey to the docks west of the bridge, it had become a part of his life. He knew the call of its deep, sonorous voice, and he thrilled at the sound. Newer boats travelled through the draw, but none was equal to the familiar black and white face of Number 2.

In past winters, when the old car-ferry was laid up for repairs, the men in the crew came to Adolph's tiny cell to smoke and tell their well-seasoned yarns. There was Tim Halloran, a young Irishman who lived at Starrett Bay. Tim had been married just a year. His wife had been a waitress in a restaurant down by the river, a lonesome little thing just over from Ireland. The young fellow had told Adolph all about it. There was going to be a baby soon, and

Tim was looking for a job where he could stay home and wouldn't have to leave Tina so much. A trip or two more —

Then, there was Jake Hall, a rough old man who had spent all of his life on the lake. Somehow one never associated tender traits with Jake. But Jake had a son who was going to college. The boy had earned every cent himself. In June, Jake was planning to lay off a trip or two and see his son graduate. All winter, he had talked of it.

There were many more. They liked to talk about the ones at home, and Adolph, who had no one belonging to him, liked to listen. To strangers they might seem raw, uncouth men, who looked forward to a day or two of idleness in the saloons which crouched along the piers, but it was their gentler side that Adolph knew. Some of them he had never spoken to in his life; the powerful man, with the burning beard and hair, a brilliant splash of color on the deck; the swarthy little fellow with the deep scar on his cheek; the fair young giant of a Norwegian who smiled like a girl. Still, they also belonged to the old boat.

Adolph turned away from the window, through which he had been staring at the taunting blue of the lake with its dancing billows. All of them had perished out there somewhere. Things would never be as they had been before. Adolph knew that. He would go on tolling the bell and swinging the bridge day after day, but he was a lonely old man, who had lost his friends.

Neptune jumped down from the cushioned chair, inviting his master with fretful meows to seat himself. But even Neptune was a torment now. Neptune had been a present from the captain of Number 2, a jovial man who came sometimes and sat with Adolph. And the captain, too, was lost.

Adolph dropped into his chair, and Neptune, stretching himself out on the old man's knees, purred under the soothing touch of fingers rubbed along his smooth gray back.

"I wish I was goin' t'stay home," Adolph muttered, "and not goin' down to Bach's to-day." Neptune, his eyes closed, made no comment. "I ain't got the heart to be off with the boys to-day." His blue eyes looked dull, and he clutched his beard with the unoccupied hand. "I ain't got the heart for it," he repeated.

Suddenly, there were sounds outside, the door was opened, and an old man, with sunken, toothless jaws, deep set dark eyes, and grizzled hair under an old slouch hat, stood before him.

"Well, Adolph," was his greeting.

"Good day, Emil Schleis."

"You ready to start off?" Emil asked. "The boys'll be waitin' down to Bach's for you."

Emil, seated beside Adolph, made his weekly survey of his friend's quarters with his keen, dark eyes.

"Nice an' snug," he commented enviously, "an' all to yerself. You're a lucky man, Adolph." He gazed at the gay calendars which covered the walls,

the table with its red cloth and a few tramps of books, the tiny stove, the cupboard, and Neptune purring on Adolph's knees.

"Yes, all to myself," echoed the old bridge-tender.

"I'm 'most out o' tobaccey again," Emil went on. "Next Saturday I'm layin' on gettin' for myself a fine pipe they're sellin' at Anderson's." The lean face was creased with furrows of pleasant anticipation. He took out his old pipe, filled it, put a match to the bowl, and began to puff away with fine energy. "Minna's a good woman," he said at last, "an' my son's wife, but she won't have smokin' in the house." He sighed and looked at Adolph for consolation. "Women is terrible tryin' on a man," he grumbled.

"But there's the little one, your son's boy, Emil," Adolph reminded him.

"That needs a heap o' tendin' now he's on his legs," Emil said.

"He's a spry little lad," Adolph answered with a fond smile.

Emil was not listening. "I'll lay up a store o' tobaccey with what I earn to-day," he muttered to himself, "an' nobody'll say what I do with my own money." He looked up at Adolph again. "Well, be ye off?" he asked severely.

Adolph rose from his chair, and reached for his hat. Neptune, unceremoniously set upon the floor, was growling at his master's departure. "Tell the boys I'm takin' charge down here," Emil called after him as he descended the stairs.

Adolph walked slowly along the bridge and down the street until he came to Bach's Place. Three old men, with their white beards neatly brushed, wearing loose crumpled clothes and wide brimmed black hats, were waiting for him.

"You're late to-day," one of them said with mild reproof. "I was beginnin' to fear we'd be goin' dry till another Saturday."

The others laughed heartily. They were older than Adolph, less erect and independent and without his bodily vigor and quick movements. They shuffled into the saloon behind him, exchanging happy childish glances, and took their favorite place in a dark corner behind some dusty palms clustered around a mechanical piano. Bach himself in a fresh white apron was hovering over them.

"Well, well," they sighed before their beer, blowing off the foam with their eager old lips and looking gratefully at Adolph. They were temperate old men; two beers around the table, and they were satisfied to push their mugs aside and draw out their pipes for a weekly smoke together.

Enveloped in soft gray clouds of tobacco, with the dull brown walls of Bach's Place, the gaudy prints on the wall, the rows of portly steins and flagons above them for a background, the four men, grown old on the shores of Lake Michigan together, looked like a group from a Rembrandt painting, with their white hair and beards, eyes hid behind bulwarks of wrinkles, leathern cheeks creased from many a hearty laugh under the open sky, hands large and

seamed from work on the boats and the season's fishing.

"Any news from the Ann Arbor?" they began.

Adolph's convivial spirits fell. "No word."

"All them men in the deep," they whispered in awe. "Sunk like rats."

"An' the big boat with 'em."

They puffed in silence for a few minutes.

"I was 'most lost off Newfoundland when I was a boy," said one. "An' you, Adolph. I remember your story o' the fishing boats off o' Norway."

"I was only a young lad," Adolph reminded them.

"Number 2 was an old timer on these lakes. When I see her limpin' in all winter, covered with snow and ice an' ready for the dry docks, I never thought there's be no more o' her. Went up to see her layin' for repairs. You knew most o' that crew, Adolph."

"Yes," he said slowly, "the men was like old friends."

"You must feel it, Adolph."

He laid his pipe on the table, and looked at his companions through a mist.

"Life ain't much after all," remarked Ole Thorson, the philosopher in their midst. "Men wavin' their caps to Adolph one mornin' the way I seen 'em do, an' the next dead in the bottom of the lake. Just snuffed out in a second, mates."

All but Adolph puffed solemnly at their pipes. "You're tellin' the truth, man," one of them volunteered cheerfully.

"There was Al Clusack," another said. "He was the only one o' the crew that lived here. The rest — they was all from the east shore, wa'n't they?"

"There was Maxy — Rag Maxy they called him on account o' the clothes he wore," remarked Ole. "He lived down by the lake somewhere. Had a flock o' young ones, they say."

Adolph bent forward. "So both of 'em — they — they had folks that's left?"

"I guess Al had too."

Adolph's companions began to talk about other things. They didn't want their afternoon spoiled. They joked and laughed together, their wrinkled mouths stretched out in cheerful curves. For a long time, they did not notice Adolph's continued silence.

"What's the trouble o' you, Adolph?" one of the men demanded at last. "An' you that ought to be the most jokin' one among us. You the only one with a steady job, an' independent as the best of 'em."

"With your money comin' every month an' the right to stop to Bach's on Saturday an' treat your friends. No one sayin' yes or no."

"An' not bossed here an' there, spadin' the garden an' tendin' a parcel o' young ones with legs fit to run further n' you want to chase 'em."

"It's grandpa this an' grandpa that all day long. Not a minute o' quiet for an old man."

All three concentrated reproving eyes upon him. "You're a complainin' man, Adolph, if you ain't satisfied."

"Not a soul to bother you."

"No," agreed Adolph sadly, "not a soul."

Adolph went away from Bach's alone. But a ray of hope had cheered him. There were Al Clusack and Rag Maxy who had left folks behind them, folks that might need somebody's help.

He knew where Al Clusack lived, a gray cottage trimmed with terra cotta, on Jefferson Street. He entered a yard, the lawn cut by the fresh earth of flower gardens, outlined with white-washed pebbles. Adolph walked around to the kitchen door. A woman with a long neck, wearing a spotlessly clean gray gingham house dress, came to the door.

"Why, it's the old bridge-tender!" she exclaimed in a crisp voice. "What d'you want? Cookies or doughnuts? I got both left."

"I—Doughnuts mebbe."

"A dozen?"

He nodded.

"Just step in."

He tiptoed cautiously over the yellow painted floor to a braided rug in front of the table.

"I knew Al," he began while Mrs. Clusack counted out the doughnuts.

"Well—"

"When the boat was laid up last winter him 'n' me—"

"He had more time to spend talkin' than I've had."

"He was a good man."

"Yes," his wife agreed tartly. "He left me pret-

ty comfortable. He had his life insured. But I done my share all these years. I used to go down to the docks when the boats was in and my doughnuts 'd go — they ain't soaked with grease as most is —”

She gave the paper bag into which she had dropped the doughnuts a quick twist, and then took the coins Adolph held out with a professionally metallic manner, closing the door promptly behind him. Adolph's face was very red, and he walked out of the yard as fast as he could.

Emil was watching for him. “It's been a busy time. Opened the bridge twice. Swung as easy when I pulled on her. How's it to Bach's? Was they waitin' for ye?” He pocketed the money given him with an important air. “Now any time you need a little change, Adolph, just remember I'm willin' to help you out.” Emil disappeared on wavering legs, and left Adolph to the sovereignty of his gray tower.

“Not one o' 'em feels it,” he muttered to himself. “Not a soul of 'em.”

He heard some one scuttling up the stairs. He rose and peered below, his face anxious with anticipation. Yes, it was Karl Schinzel with his supper.

“Karl, my boy! Come along, lad,” he called, a welcome shining in his eyes.

A youth of eight, with a round face, pink cheeks sprinkled with freckles, and blue eyes overhung by stray wisps of reddish hair, clattered up the steps, carrying a market basket, covered with a white napkin. He seated himself close to Adolph in front of

the table with the red cover and watched the napkin disappear from the top of the basket.

"That sausage looks awful good," he commented, peering inside, his lips parting hungrily.

Adolph found an extra fork on which he impaled the coveted morsel. "There now," he said, regarding the boy fondly.

Karl gobbled it down with keen relish, Neptune's green eyes following each bite sadly. "Just a crumb for old Neptune now," he begged, removing tell-tale vestiges from his lips with the back of his hand.

Adolph watched Neptune reach daintily for the fork the boy held teasingly before him.

Karl looked up at his friend suddenly. "You ain't eatin' nothin', Adolph," he observed.

"Yes, I'm eatin' plenty." He smiled as he watched Karl's eyes fasten on two pieces of cake lifted from the basket.

"You got to take 'em both," Karl commanded with heroic disinterestedness. "It's ma's Bohemian cake with caraway seeds inside."

"No, no, boy. You take one."

Karl's teeth closed promptly upon the proffered sweet.

"D'you know where the Maxy family lives, Karl?" Adolph asked.

"Ja, sure. Down by the lake. I know 'em. Those Maxy kids — there's a whole pack of 'em. Their mother lets 'em do anything they want. They could wade in the lake in the winter if they wanted to.

Bud Maxy said so. Bud he's got an awful fierce dog — he's as fierce as he can be. You better look out for that dog. He took a nip out o' Bud's leg once. Bud showed it to me. Took an apple to see it too." Karl gulped down the last of his cake. "But ma don't like Bud Maxy. She won't leave me go there." A sudden light appeared in his dancing eyes. "You goin' down there, Adolph? Ma'd let me show you the way."

"Naw," Adolph growled. "I dunno's I'm goin'. I got the bridge to look after an' all them boats. If I was leavin' my job an' goin' off —" He stopped suddenly.

Karl was patting Neptune's silky ears. "Ain't cats' ears funny? How long you had Neptune, Adolph? He's an awful nice cat."

Adolph began to gather up the dishes, and pack them in the basket. There was some bread left. "Guess we'll throw it to the birds, my boy," Adolph suggested.

The two, the bearded old man and the chubby-faced child, went down on the bridge together.

"I begin feedin' 'em when the ice gathers up thick on the river," Adolph said as the gulls circled around them. "An' when they get so tame and friendly, I don't like to stop off sudden." Neptune rubbed against Adolph's legs and looked askance at the scene.

Karl laughed with delight. "Just watch 'em," he shouted. "Gimme some more crumbs, Adolph."

At last, Karl took up his basket. "Well, I guess I'd better be movin'."

"You have to go!" The smiling furrows around Adolph's mouth disappeared. "Well, you wait now. I got somethin' upstairs for you."

Karl followed close at Adolph's heels. "Don't you eat 'em till you get home," commanded Adolph as he brought Mrs. Clusack's doughnuts from his cupboard.

Karl seized the bag with a grin. "No, I won't. Goodbye." He opened the door. "Many thanks," he said, turning back. "Goodbye."

Adolph stood at the window and watched the boy out of sight. His little room seemed like a hollow shell, with Karl's round, pink face gone.

On Saturday, a moonlit spring night, the bridge resounded until late with passing feet, and Adolph, standing on the bridge, greeted those making the journey from one side of town to the other. At last, lying on his hard cot, with the moon and the stars peering in his uncurtained windows, he was free to close his eyes. But he could not sleep. The beauty of the night was too sweet, mocking an old man left alone in one small room. The surge of humanity on the board walk below only intensified his isolation, like the coveted joys in dreams, which come close only to escape grasping fingers. He turned and tossed, restless and misérable.

Suddenly, the siren call of an approaching boat summoned him, and he rose from his sleepless bed with glad relief. He descended the steps cautiously, holding his lantern before him. Slowly he began to pull at the bell rope, the wind blowing his gray hair

and beard and fluttering the light of his lantern. The red beacons from the boats lying along the shore and the lights of the bridge were reflected in the river. The night visitor again called out its greeting, making a gentle slush as it approached, gliding gracefully nearer and nearer and lighting up the black waters with its searchlight. The men called out in the darkness, "Ahoy, ahoy," their voices echoing, and Adolph shouted in return, "Ahoy," as they passed by.

The coming of the boat gave him a faint touch of comfort, and he waited, like an anxious mother, for its return. Later in the night, the boat started on a second voyage with the same cheerful call to the guardian of its safety, and the men shouted again before they passed out into the open lake.

"It was just so that the others went," Adolph sighed as he climbed up the stairs.

When he was back in his snug retreat, all his misery returned like the rush of a flood. He was so lonely, so utterly alone. There were none—none that really loved him, and he was getting to be an old man. Emil, but—he stopped short. And the fishermen, who had worked with him on the lakes. Yes, but they—he closed his eyes. Were any of them his friends? Bud Maxy's children, left without a father down by the lake—surely they would need him. He began to long for the dawn so that he could go to them. His noisy clock struck hour after hour. Soon it would be morning, and he would start out to find them. And then, waiting for the morn-

ing, he thought of Karl. At the thought of his daily visitor, Adolph smiled in the dark night. Soon the whistling little boy would bring his breakfast. Adolph fell asleep and when he awoke he remembered with a jump of the heart Rag Maxy's wife and children.

Already a steady procession of people was going over the bridge to six o'clock mass, men and women soberly, children skipping at their parent's heels. Adolph descended to the bridge to wait for Karl. He came like the spring breeze, his white blouse blowing out behind him, a wind-full sail.

"Run over to Emil's house," he commanded the boy, "and tell him to come down and tend the bridge for me at ten o'clock. I'm goin' off on business. You tell Emil that."

When Karl was gone, Adolph, before eating his breakfast, reached into a bag that hung on a peg back of the door. He dumped the contents on the floor, and drew out two calico shirts from the heap. They were the last ones he had bought, still almost new. He folded them clumsily together, and put the rest of the clothes back into the bag. Then he reached for the wallet in his hip pocket. Sitting down, he untied the leather strings slowly. There was a little pile of different coins and two worn bills. Smoothing them out, he laid them on top of the shirts, which he tied up with newspaper and string.

Emil appeared as pleased as a child to have something to do, and when the second procession of churchgoers was passing over the bridge, Adolph,

honoring the day with confining new boots and a big felt hat, went with them, his package hidden under one arm. Across the river he left the Sabbath procession and started off on an intersecting street, past the aluminum works and the pea-canning factory and then along a narrow alley leading to the lake.

A row of tumbled houses, hugging a sandy stretch of land, adorned with the rubbish of the sprawling town, was at the end of it. Adolph inquired where the Maxys lived.

"Where all them kids is," a woman informed him, pointing to the last house.

A group of children in the dooryard was crowded about a wagon and a horse with downcast head, and some furniture was being carried out of the house, an old oak bed, a kitchen chair, and a bureau with the mirror gone.

A stooped woman, with very black eyes, came toward him. The oldest of the children, a boy with a dirty white dog scampering at his heels, faced Adolph, but the others became a compact mass of frightened eyes and tumbled hair, clinging to the mother like timid young chicks.

"D'yօ come to see me? Walk in." She pointed to the man who was loading the furniture into the wagon. "My brother's packin' us up. To-day's the only time he could spare the team. He lives over t' Milltown. I'm goin' over there for a spell."

Adolph stood awkwardly in the empty room. "You're goin' right off then?"

She nodded. "My brother's wife is dead. I'm goin' to keep house for him."

"You're provided for then?" Adolph said with a sigh.

"My brother'll do what he can," she said. "He ain't got much, but — an' I'll put my big boy—" She pointed to him outside with evident pride. "I'll put him to work."

Adolph moved toward the door. "I knew you had a boy," He held out his package. "They ain't good for much. An' they'll be kind o' big. But if he could wear 'em. Shirts," he said.

She took the bundle. "They'll come in handy," she assured him gratefully.

Adolph, on the step, turned back. "I knew Maxy," he said, "an' if I could do somethin'—" He almost stumbled over the baby, a barefooted urchin with a tangle of yellow hair, playing just outside the door. "You just come to me," he repeated, his face very red, "an' if I could help out —"

She stood in the doorway. "One o' the men that owned Maxy's boat — he come here. He was real kind. He said he'd look after the children. But thanks just the same."

Adolph went away. They did not need him either. He walked back very slowly to his gray tower, now like the dreary island of a castaway with miles of green waste separating the exile from every human being.

All of the long Sabbath afternoon, idle children ran back and forth on the bridge. Karl, with a

crowd of boys flocking about him, was riding his bicycle. There were times when any one but Adolph would have thought Karl a nuisance; for the boy adopted a proprietary air toward the bridge, and showed off his influence over Adolph before the other boys.

Late in the afternoon, Adolph was opening the drawbridge for an approaching boat. The crack had begun to widen when he saw Karl leap over it on his bicycle. The old man closed the bridge quickly and shouted at Karl. The boy rode toward him, a triumphant smile on his face.

Adolph was wild with rage. He seized Karl and shook him vigorously. Karl did not make a sound. "Now you stay right here now while I make the turn," Adolph shouted, giving him another shake. "Don't you stir."

When the bridge was safely closed again, the bridge-tender looked down at Karl. "You might o' got killed," he said hoarsely.

Karl's clouded face brightened. "Ah no, I wouldn't, Adolph. The boys said I couldn't do it," he grinned, "but I showed 'em."

Adolph stared at him helplessly. "Don't you never do that again."

"No, I won't," Karl promised carelessly. "But you hurt me."

A spasm of pain crossed the old man's face. "I didn't mean to, my boy."

"That's all right," Karl said magnanimously, mounting his bicycle, and smiling back at Adolph as he rode off.

Adolph's hands were trembling, and he felt a little weak before he got to the top of the stairs. Seated in his arm chair, he drew a deep breath. "He don't bear me no ill will for it," he confided to Neptune. "He's a good-hearted lad."

The old man waited anxiously until it was time for Karl to come back with his supper. He sat listening for the clatter of the boy's heavy shoes. He wanted to be sure that he and Karl were the same old friends. Karl burst into the room with his usual smile. Neither of them mentioned the incident of the afternoon. Karl stayed and visited a long time, boasting, at length, of his superiority over other boys bigger than he. Finally, the three old cronies of the Saturday revels at Bach's came to have a smoke with Adolph, and Karl started home.

The next day about noon, just before the throng of workers from the south end of town journeyed northward to their homes, Adolph started to open the bridge for a small fishing schooner which had steamed into the harbor. As he bent over the lever, he caught sight of Karl running toward him with the basket of dinner. He motioned the boy back, and the bridge yawned wider. Karl stopped at the chasm, gave a leap, and as Adolph turned around, he saw a flutter of flying legs and Karl disappeared from sight.

The bridge was partly open, and the schooner was coming slowly on. Adolph paused only an instant. The gray house, with its quiet hours, the friends of

many years, and the long hours of daily duty, at once assumed a sweetness which clutched at Adolph's throat. But more precious than all the rest was the chubby face of a mischievous small boy. Adolph threw off his coat and dropped from the bridge.

There was a dizzy moment when he struck the water before he saw the boy come up suddenly close to him. Then, Adolph made a wild stroke and seized him in an iron grip. The twelve o'clock whistle pierced Adolph's ear. He made several strokes forward, and he saw some small boats tied along the shore. A sudden mist blinded him. The bridge seemed black with people, and, all at once, the cold river sent a helpless chill over the bridge-tender and his fingers weakened. A gasping sense of defeat seized him, but he reached out blindly for something bobbing around nearby. Shouts rang in his ears. His fingers seemed to grow weaker and weaker, one at a time gave way, but he tried to hold on to the boy. Then, at last, he loosed his hold and he felt himself going down, down into the depths of the river.

He lay calm and untroubled in the gray cloud that surrounded him. His eyes were closed. He could not move his hands or his feet. At first the silence was unbroken, but suddenly he heard a woman sobbing. Then memory came back to him. Down here, below the surface of the river, the sorrow of the mother who had lost her boy could reach him. Karl was gone. It all came back to him.

The dimness around him grew less, as if the depths were pierced by relentless sun from above.

"Adolph, Adolph," Karl's mother sobbed.

"The boy is gone," he whispered weakly.

Again he heard the agony of Karl's mother.

"Gone," the old man repeated, "but I tried to save him."

"Here I am," piped up a childish voice close to him.

Adolph opened his weary eyes slowly. He tried to raise one limp hand before him, but it fell heavily and helplessly. He was lying in a darkened room, and from the shadows rose the indistinct figure of some one who had once been known to him.

"Here I am, Adolph," the same voice said. "You held on till they came." Then, in childish pleading, he added, "Pa's goin' to lick me if you say so."

Adolph rubbed his eyes. A warm young hand was pressed over his helpless fingers, and Karl was leaning over him.

Another figure, more distinct, a large powerful man with a red face, a yellow mustache, and blue eyes like Karl's, boomed forth in a deafening bass, "My good friend! My old man, Adolph. To the boat you got him, Adolph. My boy you saved him." The big man's voice broke in a sob. "A good beating I give him for this at night."

The boy began to whimper softly.

Adolph shook his head. "No, no, Schinzel," he whispered with an effort. "No, no." He pressed the boy's hand. "A good boy," he said caressingly.

Mrs. Schinzel motioned to Karl, but Adolph pressed the boy's chubby arm.

"Let him stay with Adolph," she told her husband.

The two tiptoed out of the room, while Karl climbed up on the bed, clinging to Adolph's wrinkled hand and nestling close up to him. A soft warmth drove away the chill from Adolph's cold limbs and he closed his eyes. But there were voices outside the door, and a widening ray of light from without pierced the gloom around his bed. Three old men were looking in at him.

"Emil's at the bridge," they whispered hoarsely, "and all's well."

They tottered up to his bed and took his hand, each one in turn, then every man blew his nose hard, and hurried out of the room.

Adolph closed his eyes once more. He was an old man, and he was more tired than he had ever been before. Again he felt himself going off into the unknown. The curtains flapped in the breeze, the lake nearby beat against the shore, Adolph felt a gentle peace take possession of him, and he slept.

In his dreams, he saw Karl's rosy face before him. But he was no longer an old bridge-tender in a lonely tower. Crowded about him were all of his friends, Emil, the three old fishermen, and all those who daily crossed and recrossed the bridge that he had tended. They pressed closer and closer until Adolph felt surrounded by the love of the whole world. He stretched out his arms, and then he

awoke. Karl, fast asleep, lay close beside him, his arm thrown protectingly over his old friend. There was no one else. But Adolph was content; for he had saved a child.

For Delight

By HARTLEY B. ALEXANDER

Fairies be mid springtide flowers,
Fairies be mid autumn leaves,
In mossy grots, in wooded bowers,
And in the harvest's yellow sheaves:

Fairies be in many places
If you will but seek,—
Some with merry nutbrown faces,
Some with petalled cheek:

If your faiths do be but true ones,
Everywhere you go
Bright brown eyes will greet your blue ones,
Airy kisses blow

From the hedgerow and the heather,
Brookside banks and acorned dells,—
In all sorts of pleasant weather,
Fairies, whisp'ring magic spells.

Souvenir

By CONSTANCE RUMMONS

Shouldst thou return again to tread the way
Which we together trod that distant day—
The path that leads behind the orchard wall,
Down by the pasture hedge, to where the tall
Old sycamore its widespread shadow flings
Upon the soft young grass, and each wind brings
The scent of white sweet-clover, and the view
Widens before thee to the distant, blue,
Low-swelling hills,—shouldst walk that way again,
So would I walk beside thee: not as then,
But now unseen, unheard. No lightest blade
Would stir beneath my foot, no sound be made
By rustling of my garments, nor shouldst thou feel
My hand upon thine arm; but there would steal
Quietly upon thy reminiscent mind
A knowledge of my presence, and thou wouldst find
Me in the grass, me in the rustling trees,
Me in the sweetness of the scented breeze,
Me in the sun's bright light, down-shining clear,
Me in the distant hills, me in the near
Brown earth beneath thy feet. So should it be,
Wert thou to walk there,—I would be with thee.

Romance

By BERNARD RAYMUND

Oh, the sun is falling from the burnished bowl of
heaven,

The pines are black on the hill above the town,
The weirs are calling through the crimson hush of
twilight

Where the river mist comes drifting softly down.
There roams a vagrant wind among the hives of
summer,

Idly caressing the heavy-headed grain,
And night wakes fragrant to a hidden cryptic
promise,

Floats down the white road that lengthens to the
plain.

A shadow passes, slips between the lilac bushes,
Was that a whistle, a fumbling at the gate,
And did the grasses sound from swiftly flowing
ankles?

Oh, could he know how hard it is to wait!
— For slow words spoken soft on such a night as
this one,

Never forgotten, never wholly still,
Dear dreams broken long ago past hope of mending
Hold me a-tremble upon the darkened sill.

Hellenica

By EDWARD J. O'BRIEN

I

Twilight hath veiled his eyes
In the blue silence,
Sophron,
Who dreams of the morning
And white tides.

II

Here, in the cloudy night,
Murmurs the wind of ocean,
Bearing tidings of ships
To a sailor home from the sea.

III

Bird-haunted silences
Are troubled with wings of memory,
But the swallow returns not
Unto the roof of Charis.

IV

Light shrouds his dream
In a silver urn,
While the dust that he forsook,
Bears once more
The flesh that once was longing.

V

High on the purple mountain
An eagle soars,
But below in the valley
Only the wind from the stars
Remembers the flame
Shrined immortal within this rustling hollow.

VI

Under the columned pine
A poet sleeps,
With the swinging arch of stars
Making music above him.

VII

Spring and the coming of swallows
Opened her bridal day,
But darker wings shadowed the door,
And her spouse now mourns in vain
By another bed,
Where reeds sway over her pillow.

VIII

Light fades from the sky,
And the blue Thessalian hills
Grieve for the glory departed
Of one who sailed at dawn for the morning star.

IX

Here, on the rain-washed hillside,
Where light dies over the grasses,
Myrrha bears on her breast
The little child
Who led her home to the shadows.

X

Wind, sweep gently
Over the bent narcissi
Bowed with the sighs
Of a shepherd who flutes here lonely.

XI

When spring comes over the mountain
From southern valleys,
Mela stirs on her couch of woven violets,
For a low wind pulls at her heart
That the grasses cover.

XII

Cicada, pulsing alone in the summer noontide,
Sing of wind-haunted glades
Of mossy coolness.
So shall my heart remember
The tangled light
Where I met Philemon dreaming.

Triolet

By H. W. HOLBROOK

The maple leaves flame brightest when they fall;
They dance triumphant down the purple stair,
And wild geese, taunting Winter, southward sprawl.
The maple leaves flame brightest when they fall;
A swirl, a dazzling pirouette is all—
It shows the world how very much they care.
The maple leaves flame brightest when they fall;
They dance triumphant down the purple stair.

